

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-5 and 7-16 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. The Amendment is fully supported by the original disclosure. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims 1-5 and 7-16 in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Examiner has allowed claims 7-16.

Written Statement Telephone Interview:

On November 18, 2003, the Applicant and the Examiner conducted a telephone interview regarding the patentability of independent claim 1. In the final Office Action, the Examiner had rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Dickason (U.S. Patent No. 4,281,728).

During the interview, Applicant asserted that the "supported by a coupling" limitation of claim 1 was not anticipated by element 88 of Dickason. The Examiner replied that even if the Applicant's position were true, it would be potentially obvious to combine the load plate element 22 of Dickason with the restraining bar 88 of Dickason to render this recited limitation of claim 1 obvious.

Accordingly, Applicant proposed the amendment to claim 1, attached hereto, which further specifies that "said weighing means is located only within the end portions" in addition to the previously argued limitation that the forward and rear sections be "supported by a coupling".

The Examiner indicated, during the telephone interview, that the proposed amendment after final would be entered and would result in allowance of independent claim 1.

Likewise, claims 4-5 are also in condition for allowance due at least to their dependence on independent claim 1.

Informalities:

Reply to Final Office Action of November 10, 2003

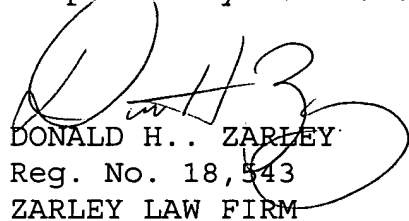
Applicant has amended claim 7, line 3, by deleting "lamps" and inserting --ramps--.

Conclusion:

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that claims 1-5 and 7-16 are in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests allowance of such claims. If any issues remain that may be expeditiously addressed in a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 515-558-0200.

No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this amendment; however, consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account 50-2098.

Respectfully submitted,



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